

# Maryland SHIP "Health Action" Newsletter

January 24, 2014

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## Howard County Launches a Healthy Eating Active Living (HEAL) Zone



The Howard County Health Department and Healthy Howard have partnered to launch a regional health initiative to create a Healthy Eating Active Living (HEAL) Zone in southern Howard County. The initiative focuses on decreasing the availability of sugary beverages and increasing the affordability of fruits and vegetables, physical activity, and access to affordable health care. The HEAL Zone, which is aligned with the goals of the Health Enterprise Zones (HEZ) in the state, intends to reduce disparities and improve access to care by expanding partnerships and resources.

Click [here](#) for more information about the Howard County HEAL Zone.

## CDC Releases State Prevention Status Reports



The CDC released the 2013 Prevention Status Reports highlighting the status of state-level policies and practices designed to prevent public health concerns. The individual reports provide information to state policy makers and health professionals to review health status and identify areas of improvement. The individual reports highlight 10 health topics including the following: excessive alcohol use; food safety; healthcare-associated infections; heart disease and stroke; HIV; motor vehicle injuries; nutrition, physical activity, and obesity; prescription drug overdose; teen pregnancy; and tobacco use.

The Maryland HIV Prevention Status Report shows positive ratings for state HIV testing laws consistent with consent and counseling parameters, and state laws requiring reporting of all viral load data. Visit the Prevention Status Reports [Web site](#) to see the Maryland report for each health topic.

Click [here](#) for more information about the Prevention Status Reports.

## Public Health Targets Obesity: "A Route to Better Health"



American  
Public Health  
Association

Obesity is a costly health concern in the U.S. with \$152 billion and \$73 billion in direct and indirect costs respectively spent on medical care each year. The number of obese children and adolescents

has almost tripled in 30 years. According to a recently released infographic from the American Public Health Association (APHA), one in three U.S. children and adolescents ages 2-19 is overweight or obese, resulting in a generation at risk for cardiovascular disease, diabetes and other serious health problems. APHA reports 112,000 obesity-related deaths with obese children being more than twice as likely to die before age 55. With, innovative public health approaches and partnerships improving nutrition and increasing physical activity, obesity rates in the U.S. are likely to improve.

Click [here](#) to view the American Public Health Association Infographic.

View the [SHIP measure](#) and [tools](#) for reducing the percentage of children and adolescents who are obese.

View the [SHIP measure](#) and [tools](#) for increasing the proportion of children and adolescents who are at a healthy weight.

## Diabetes Prevalence Increases Among Latino Immigrants



According to a recent survey of Latino immigrants in the U.S. by National Public Radio (NPR), the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation (RWJF) and the

Harvard School of Public Health, the most concerning health issue for Latinos and their families is diabetes. Hispanics have a high prevalence of type 2 diabetes with 10% of Latino adults diagnosed with diabetes or pre-diabetes. Limited access to care and few healthy food options worsen prevalence rates.

Approximately 31% of respondents reported being unable to afford health insurance in the past year and 25% reported being unable to afford hospital bills and prescription medications.

Additionally, 20% of Mexican Americans rated the availability of fresh fruits and vegetables in their neighborhoods as fair or poor.

Click [here](#) for more information.

Click [here](#) for more information about the survey.

View the [SHIP measure](#) and [tools](#) for reducing diabetes-related emergency department visits.

## National Drug Facts Week



National Drug Facts Week (NDFW), a health observance for teens that aims to shatter the myths about drugs and drug abuse, is taking place January 28 - February 3. During this week, the National Institute on Drug Abuse (NIDA) highlights facts and statistics from

experts about drugs and drug abuse for teens. Approximately 33% of high school seniors report using an illicit drug in the past year and over 10% report non-medical use of addictive prescription medications. Since many teens are unaware of the negative health consequences of drug abuse, NDFW focuses on informing teens and preparing them to make better decisions.

Click [here](#) for more information about National Drug Facts Week.

Click [here](#) to access the National Drug Facts Week toolkit.

View the [SHIP measure](#) and [tools](#) for reducing drug-induced deaths.